

A Guide for Young People



Youth Justice
Agency



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Introduction

People sometimes get involved in behaviour that means they get into trouble with their families, their community or the police.

This can happen for different reasons

- They are unhappy
- Their friends encourage them to do things they shouldn't do
- They get involved in taking drugs or drinking alcohol

All of these things can make them do stuff that they wouldn't normally do.

When people do these things other people get hurt and scared for themselves, their family and their community.

Restorative Justice is a way to deal with situations when someone has done something which harms someone else and gives them the chance to put it right to find out more please keep reading.

The poetry and art in this book have been produced as a result of competitions run by the Restorative Justice Forum and The Youth Justice Agency. We have included these pieces to help demonstrate what restorative justice is and how it has impacted on people who have had the experience of taking part in it.

We hope that once you have read this book you will understand the benefits of restorative justice.

Links to Websites

www.youthjusticeagencyni.gov.uk

www.pbni.org.uk

www.psnipolice.uk

www.ppsni.gov.uk

www.victimsupportni.co.uk

www.ni-alternatives.co.uk

www.fgcforumni.org

www.niprisonservice.gov.uk

Restorative Justice What's it all about?

Restorative Justice - is about restoring relationships

Within the Criminal Justice System restorative justice gives offenders a chance to understand how, what they have done affects others and gives them a chance to make up for it. It also gives victims a chance to get answers to their questions and tell an offender how they have been affected.

You can also find examples of restorative justice within schools, residential care settings and the community. Some examples of these can be found later in the book.

Fixing Things

Bones, trees, cars and trust
Faith, laws, blown like dust
Phones, beds, promises and rules
Hearts and minds owned by fools
Chairs, doors, windows, chains
Loyalties, relationships at times
end in pain
Some can be seen
Some can be ignored
At the end of the day All need
restored

Restorative Justice put into Practice

A restorative justice meeting will usually follow the same process no matter what the situation.

Typical Questions asked of an offender

What happened?

What were you thinking about at the time?

What have your thoughts been since?

Who has been affected by what you did?

In what way have they been affected?

What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Anyone who goes to a restorative meeting is there through choice.

People who might go to a restorative meeting include the offender, the victim a person to mediate, supporters of both the victim and the offender and individuals from the community where the harm happened.

Typical Questions asked of a victim

What did you think when you realised what had happened?

What have your thoughts been since?

How has this affected you and others?

What has been the hardest thing for you?

What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Restorative Justice in the Criminal Justice System

Probation Board for NI (PBNI)

PBNI work mainly with offenders over 18 and with any victim whose case results in one of the 10 sentences which they supervise.



In order to help victims deal with the harm caused to them and to help offenders face up to what they have done, PBNI arrange restorative meetings or contact with any victim or offender who is willing to be involved. This may be a face to face meeting or an exchange of information if they do not want to meet.

PBNI also work with community restorative justice organisations.

Victims and offenders say that although being involved in a restorative meeting can be difficult, it can really help sort out some of the difficulties which resulted from the offence.

Police Service of Northern Ireland

The Police use Restorative Justice in a number of ways to deal with low level crime and anti social behaviour

- Informed Warning or Restorative Caution known as Diversionary Disposals are used to try and stop someone from re-offending. Police recognise young people make mistakes through lack of experience or pressure from friends. A restorative disposal gives the young person the chance to meet the people who have been hurt by their actions and it does not require them to attend court.
- When dealing with the sort of problems that can affect someone's everyday life, and make them feel angry or frustrated, like neighbour disputes or nuisance behaviour, the police help bring together those involved to listen to each other and come to an agreement to fix the problem.



Northern Ireland Prison Service

The prison service holds a wide range of people from those who have failed to pay a fine, to those who have committed very serious crimes such as murder.

Men, women, adults and juveniles are in prison custody.

The youngest prisoner is 16 the oldest is 78.

Prison officers use restorative practices in a number of ways such as facilitating face to face meetings between offenders and their victims. Restorative practices are also used to mediate in disputes and to deal with bullying.

Most days of the week carefully selected prisoners are out working in the community doing activities which give something back to the community they have wronged.





Youth Justice
Agency

Youth Justice Agency

The Youth Justice Agency provide a Restorative approach to Youth Crime largely by a process called a youth conference which can be either diversionary (not dealt with in court and not a criminal conviction) or court ordered.

The youth conference is a restorative meeting which brings together the offender and whoever has been affected by the offence for example the victim and the community. The outcome from the meeting is a youth conference action plan which has been agreed by everyone at the meeting. This action plan which the offender has to complete can include things like community service, an apology to the victim, payment for damage caused, treatment for addiction or programmes to help with getting into a training course or getting a job.

Young people who took part in a Youth conference said “it’s good as it comes up with an action plan to help you and the victim” another said “I realise I have to take responsibility for my actions”

Once the action plan is agreed, it must be approved by either the Public Prosecution Service or the District Judge in the Youth Court before it can start.

The Youth Justice Agency also use the Family Group Conference process to help families deal with problems they might have. They can arrange a meeting for young people and their families to talk about the problem and work out a plan to sort it out.

What scares me about a restorative conference

In Court you just get dealt with
At a conference you have to
Face up to, and talk about what you’ve done.

The last thing I want to do is to
Talk about things. It would melt my head,
It would bring everything up!

I know that Court is just running away
From facing up to the consequences but
It’s easier in Court, because you don’t
Have to face up to what you’ve done and
Who you’ve hurt.

I’ve done things to people and they don’t deserve it.
A Restorative Conference is probably the best solution,
But it scares ME!

Youth Conference

JOE'S STORY -

JOE'S 15TH BIRTHDAY - AT HIS MATE'S HOUSE.



JOE FALLS OUT WITH HIS GIRLFRIEND, KATIE AND PETER, HIS MATE. HE THOUGHT THEY WERE GETTING TOO CLOSE AT THE PARTY..... HE STORMED OFF AFTER AN ARGUMENT.
ON HIS WAY HOME HE TRIPPED OVER A BRICK, HE LOST IT AND THREW THE BEER THROUGH THE WINDOW OF A HOUSE. THEN HE LEGGED IT.....



SOME WEEKS LATER...



-MARY'S STORY-



ED. URELAND 2009

THE YOUTH CONFERENCE

HAVE I DONE THE RIGHT THING? WILL THIS MAKE A DIFFERENCE??

IS HE GONNA TELL THE TRUTH??

CONFERENCE RULES

- Be honest
- Listen to what others say
- Don't talk back
- Be polite
- Be on time

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

"AT MY BIRTHDAY PARTY I TOOK TOO MUCH DRINK...."

JOE EXPLAINS TO THE CONFERENCE WHAT HE DID.

"I WAS REALLY ANNOYED WITH MY GIRLFRIEND AND BESTMATE AND GOT ANGRY AND LEFT THE PARTY"

"ON THE WAY HOME I TRIPPED OVER A BRICK... I JUST LOST MY TEMPER, GRABBED THE BRICK AND THREW IT THROUGH THE WINDOW"

"WITH HIS BAD TEMPER AND THE ALCOHOL, I'M NOT SURPRISED - YOU WERE FOOLISH JOE"

MARY EXPLAINS TO THE CONFERENCE HOW SHE & GEMMA WERE AFFECTED...



"I WAS JUST IN THE KITCHEN MAKING DINNER WHEN THE WINDOW WAS SMASHED"



"THERE WAS GLASS EVERYWHERE IT TOOK AGES TO GET RID OF IT ALL. I ALSO HAD TO PAY FOR THE WINDOW"



"GEMMA WAS NEARLY HIT WITH THE BRICK - SHE WAS REALLY UPSET AFTER AND COULDN'T SLEEP FOR A LONG TIME AFTERWARDS."



"I'M REALLY SORRY FOR WHAT I DID... IT WAS STUPID"

THE CO-ORDINATOR ASKS THE CONFERENCE TO THINK HOW JOE CAN MAKE AMENDS AND PREVENT THIS HAPPENING AGAIN...



YOUTH CONFERENCE - PLAN -

1. JOE WILL PAY MARY FOR THE DAMAGE TO THE WINDOW
2. JOE WILL ATTEND AN ANGER MANAGEMENT COURSE.
3. JOE WILL ATTEND A COURSE ON ALCOHOL AWARENESS
4. JOE WILL STAY OFF THE STREET WHERE MARY AND GEMMA LIVE.
5. JOE WILL DO 24 HOURS COMMUNITY SERVICE.

Co-ordinator: _____
 Young Person: _____
 Appropriate Adult: _____



"I'M GLAD WE WENT."

"MIGHT SLEEP BETTER NOW."



"I'M HEADING HOME BUT I CAN'T GO THAT WAY"

Entries from Youth Justice Agency Poster competition asking What is Restorative Justice?





Restorative Justice in the Community



Community Restorative Justice

Community Restorative Justice groups such as Alternatives NI and Community Restorative Justice Ireland deliver restorative practices in the community at local level. Both agencies have offices throughout Northern Ireland and provide programmes of mediation; conferencing; family group conferencing; youth programmes; family support; schools work and victim support. As well as working restoratively in their communities they also work with the Youth Justice Agency, Public Prosecution Service, Police Service Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Social Services ensuring communities are involved in the justice process.

Alternatives
victim + offender + community

A local young person who was involved in anti-social behaviour was referred to Alternatives by his family as they were concerned not only about the harm he was causing within the community but also that he might come to the attention of the PSNI or local paramilitaries as a result of his behaviour.



Staff from Alternatives met with him and his family and the young person agreed to get involved in a restorative process which would look at the harm caused to himself; his victims; his family and the community.

As part of this process, his support worker helped him develop a contract/action plan which would help make things as right as possible for the harm he had caused. Among other things he had damaged a pensioner's property and his schooling was seriously disrupted. Through the mediation of Alternatives he met the pensioner and wrote him an apology.

The pensioner began telling him stories about his childhood, about his life in the army and being interned in 1973.





This gave the troubles a human face and on a visit to the Ulster Museum the youth became fascinated by an exhibition about the troubles. A friendship developed as the youth shared his stories and ran errands for the pensioner.



He tidied up the pensioner's garden and was rewarded with friendship and bottles of Coke. Schooling was difficult but his dedicated support worker made links with the school, helped with his studies and even sat alongside him in school to support him. Alternatives helped him become involved in other activities to help develop his sense of self esteem and sense of self and the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service played a particularly helpful role in this process.



As a result of participating in a community based restorative programme, this young man learned about the human consequences of his actions; apologised to his victim; did volunteer work within his community to give something back and began to change how he behaved not only at school but also within his family and within the local community. Community members began to see him as something other than a wee hood and began to treat him differently.



A grassroots approach to restorative justice can help to change not only the lives of individuals but also begin to transform how communities engage with issues of crime and community safety.



Sycamore Tree

The Prison Fellowship NI provide a programme called Sycamore Tree for offenders in prison. It shows them how what they have done has affected their victim and the community. They also get to hear directly from the victim of a crime learning how it can affect their life.

"taking responsibility for my actions, I stopped thinking about myself and started thinking of others" Participant on Sycamore Tree



Victim Support

Victim Support helps people affected by any type of crime. They provide support to victims involved in restorative justice meetings with the Youth Justice Agency, the Probation Service and the Prison Service.



Extern

Extern uses restorative practices in both its community and residential projects. At Linden Services for Children Residential Unit restorative practices are used to help manage young people's behaviour.

Family Group Conference Forum NI

Family Group conferencing is a meeting for young people and their families, friends and important people in their lives to talk about any problems they are having and what help they need.

Every family has their problems from time to time and a Family Group Conference can be a good way of finding answers to them because the decisions which are made at the meeting are made by the people who know and care about the young person.

A family group conference is run by an independent co-ordinator who will make all the arrangements for the meeting to take place and will help everyone take part in the meeting.

At the meeting everyone talks about the problem and the young person, family and friends have private time to come up with a plan which is then agreed by all.

A young person who took part in a family group conference said "I had a lot of say in who came, all the right people came. I was able to say what I wanted. I was listened to". Her dad said "It was a very good idea for all the family to sit down and work out things between themselves".



Believe in
children



Barnardo's

Barnardo's NI

Young People in Residential Care

Barnardo's provide support to staff in residential care to use restorative practices as a way of reducing the number of children in care getting into trouble with the police and courts.

Some examples of how they do this are:

One to One: if one person says or does something that upsets or hurts another person they talk to them about it

Small Group: when one or two young people are upsetting each other a staff member talks to them directly

Circle: If one person upsets everyone else they all come together to discuss it.

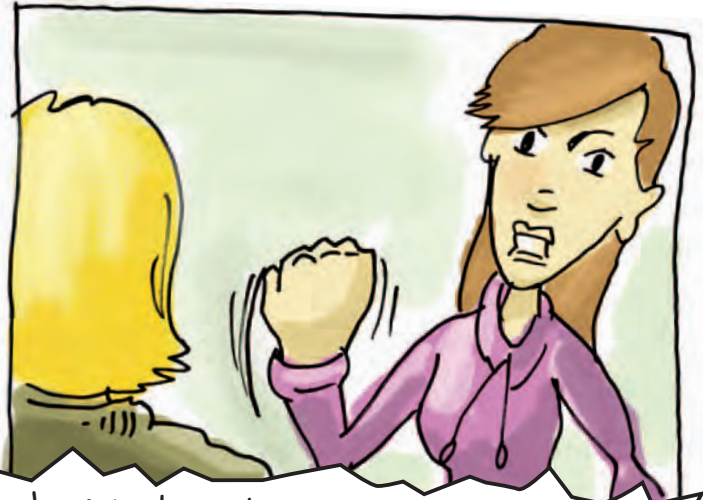
Restorative meeting: When a young person is involved in something serious a meeting is arranged between them and the person who has been harmed. At the meeting they try to repair the relationship and to agree what can be done to make up for the harm caused.

Young people out of school

Barnardos have been involved in working with young people excluded from school either because of their behaviour (bullying, aggression, damage) or truancy. Using restorative Practices and Family Group Conferencing the aim is to help young people want to be in school and feel safe in school by getting the support of their family, friends and teachers.

Barnardos have been involved in training and supporting teachers to understand and learn more about this way of working where the young person has a voice, takes responsibility for their actions, tries to make right the harm they have caused and receives support from others to help them in the future.

Mary is 14 years old and has been a resident in Hollybrook for 14 months. She's very unhappy at not being able to live at home and sometimes she gets very sad and angry about this.



Jane is her key worker in the unit and both have a good relationship but sometimes Mary's anger gets the better of her and she lashes out.

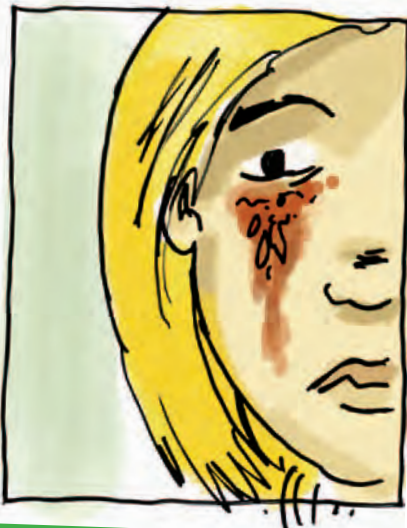


One night Mary did not come back to the unit until 12.00 midnight. Jane was very concerned and worried and when Mary returned Jane told her this and asked her to explain where she was.



Mary got very annoyed and started using abusive language to Jane, when Jane asked Mary to stop Mary lifted a small vase and threw it at Jane.

The vase smashed against Jane's face and cut her just below the eye.



Jane had to go to hospital and needed two stitches.

Technically this is serious assault and Jane could have pressed criminal charges. However Jane discussed this with the unit manager, Peter, and told him that she preferred to hold a restorative conference to deal with this matter.

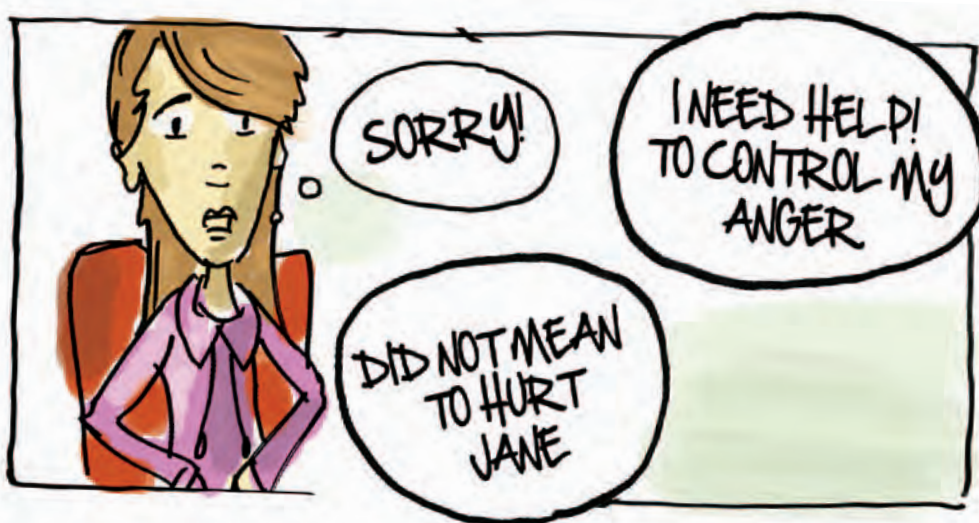


Peter discussed this with Mary, who was extremely sorry for what had happened and a Formal Restorative Conference was planned.



Mary and Jane were there and so was the unit Manager, Mary's social worker came to support her and Jane was supported by another colleague. Before the conference a worker from another unit, who had also trained with Barnardo's, prepared Mary and Jane and the other participants and then facilitated the Restorative Conference.

Mary was able to accept responsibility for what she had done and Jane was able to talk about the impact the incident had had on her.



Both of them listened to each other and Mary was able to say how sorry she was for what she had done. Jane was able to tell Mary that she really cared about her and had been frightened when she hadn't returned to the Unit. Jane said the hardest thing for her to accept was how abusive and violent Mary had been. Jane said that in order to make things right Mary would need to assure her that this was not going to happen again. Mary admitted she needed help to try to control her anger and that she did not want to hurt Jane again.

Activity Pages

Role Play

Why not try having your own restorative meeting using one of the examples below:

- 1 Jim who is 17 years old was arrested for drinking alcohol in the park, he agreed to go to a youth conference to work out an action plan to make up to his parents and the community who have been affected by his behaviour

Who might attend

Jim Mum Dad A Police Officer
Youth Conference Co-ordinator
Representative from residents association

Give everyone a role to play and see what action plan you can come up with to stop Jim re offending and show his mum and the community that he is sorry

- 2 Lisa took a lipstick from her local chemist she agreed to go to a youth conference to work out an action plan to show that she was sorry and to take responsibility for what she had done. Lisa is currently living in residential care and will be supported at the meeting by her social worker. The manager from the chemist will also attend to tell Lisa how theft affects the business.

Who might attend

Lisa Social Worker Lisa's Sister
A police officer Youth Conference Co-ordinator
Chemist Manager

Give everyone a role to play and see what action plan you can come up with to stop Lisa re offending and make up for what she has done

True or False

- 1 Restorative Justice is just about saying sorry
- 2 The victim gets a say in the action plan
- 3 If you are applying for a job, a place at university or travelling abroad you may have to tell that you have a criminal record
- 4 Your criminal record is cleared when you become 18 years old
- 5 If you shout in the street you can be arrested

Answers on the next page

True or False – Answers

- False** – Restorative Justice is not just about saying sorry it helps people sort out their differences, move on, take responsibility for what they have done and show they are sorry
- True** – Restorative Justice gives the victim the chance to say how they feel and tell the young person what they can do to show they are sorry
- True** – Employers, universities and some countries will want to know if you have any criminal convictions before they decide if they will give you a job, a place on a course or allow you to visit their country
- False** – A conviction stays on your record until it is spent no matter what your age, some convictions never become spent.
- True** – You can be breaking the law if you shout in the street, depending on what you shout, the time of day and how many people are around – you could be arrested for disorderly behaviour

WORDSEARCH

Q	W	E	R	D	T	Y	M	E	E	T	I	N	G	U
I	S	D	N	E	I	R	F	O	P	A	S	D	F	G
E	E	H	J	K	L	J	U	S	T	I	C	E	Z	X
C	N	M	I	S	A	P	Y	L	E	A	H	C	I	M
I	T	A	L	K	C	V	Y	N	N	O	J	V	E	B
L	E	E	B	A	N	R	E	S	T	O	R	E	M	J
A	N	N	C	R	V	B	N	Y	M	Q	N	W	E	U
F	C	Y	G	E	H	J	T	K	L	A	Z	X	C	D
D	E	A	Y	N	V	I	C	T	I	M	Y	R	A	G
N	T	M	L	Y	N	U	I	L	O	P	A	S	R	E
E	A	O	I	U	E	R	L	I	N	D	A	Y	O	A
L	N	R	M	C	Q	I	W	R	P	Q	W	R	L	L
L	N	M	A	F	G	N	N	A	E	E	L	R	I	A
O	O	Z	F	J	P	H	T	I	A	L	R	O	N	U
C	D	P	I	S	A	M	R	A	H	T	K	S	E	N

Victim
Harm
Community
Family
Friends
Justice

Sentence
Judge
Meeting
Talk
Sorry
Restore

Definitions

OFFENDER: A person who does something wrong (against the law)

RE-OFFEND: When someone continues to do things wrong (against the law)

VICTIM: A person who has been hurt by another person, group or event

COMMUNITY: A group of people who may live in a local area or are part of a group

MEDIATOR: A person who is independent and helps the meeting run smoothly

SENTENCE: A punishment for a crime

SPENT (CONVICTION): A conviction which is no longer taken into account when a period of time has elapsed

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY: When someone accepts they have done something wrong or hurt someone and wants to put it right

JUSTICE: Upholding what is fair and right

JUDGE: The person in court who decides if someone is guilty and what their punishment should be

PUBLIC PROSECUTION SERVICE: An organisation who decide if someone should be taken to court or dealt with in a diversionary way

CRIMINAL RECORD: A record kept by police on all offences someone has been found guilty of

RESIDENTIAL CARE: a place where a young person lives who cannot stay with their family

Blind Hate

As Bill and I were walking
I saw a muddy sod,
Outside Mrs. Mitchell's house.
"Ya see her, she's a Prod!"

I bet ya would'nt throw that brick,
I bet ya never could."
"Put that brick into my hand
I bet ya that I would"

The brick went through the window,
I saw it hit her head.
We both then started running
In fear that she was dead.

I saw the paramedics
Carefully stitch her head.
I felt such a guilty low-life
I wished it was me instead.

Later I went to the hospital.
I heard the family sighs
My conscience made me do something.
It made me apologise.

I walked into her room
And stood there by her bed.
I saw the pain that I had caused,
The stitches in her head.

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